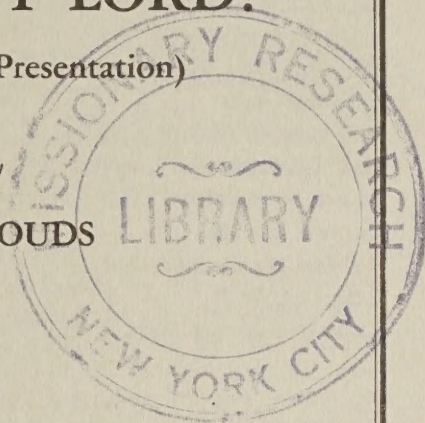


HOW MUCH OWEST THOU THY LORD?

(A Dramatic Presentation)

By

R. C. DOUDS



THE BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.
156 Fifth Avenue New York

CHARACTERS

MRS. CRAWFORD, No. 1.

JEAN, a high school girl, Mrs. Crawford's daughter.

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION.

MRS. CRAWFUT, mother in ancestral home in Northern Europe about Second Century A. D.

JAN, daughter of Mrs. Crawford.

MRS. CRAWFORD, No. 2, mother in Tennessee Mountain home.

JEANIE, her daughter.

CHINESE MOTHER.

AH SEN, her daughter.

CHEE LIN, the father.

CHINESE MEDICINE MAN, priest.

SUGGESTIONS

The stage scenery in this play should be just as simple and as light as possible, so that it can be shifted without noise, as the shifting must be done while the play is in progress in front of the curtain and the least confusion back of the curtain will detract seriously from the effect of the pageant. A few ever-green boughs properly arranged will give the forest effect in the first scene. Two folding screens with a few boughs and furs thrown over them will make a very good and easily removed hut. Those in charge of changing the stage should be cautioned to do it in absolute quiet. Over-elaboration of scenery must be carefully avoided. All of the costumes can be made out of materials available at practically no expense.

While the scenes are in progress on the stage, Jean and Mrs. Crawford should watch them with tense interest.

A chair should be provided at one side of platform in front of curtain where the Spirit of Civilization is seated while the scenes are in progress on the stage.

The words "HOW MUCH OWEST THOU THY LORD?" should appear in large letters over platform in front of curtain.

HOW MUCH OWEST THOU THY LORD?

By R. C. DOUDS

SCENE 1

A comfortable and well-furnished parlor of a well-to-do family. The scene must be arranged on platform in front of curtain and at one side. At the left of the audience Mrs. James Crawford, a middle-aged mother, well-dressed, is seated on left end of divan by reading lamp with a magazine. Divan should be placed well over to left, partly facing audience and partly facing stage. Enter Jean Crawford, a high school girl, about 15 years of age, from other end of platform (right). A second curtain is not necessary. Mrs. Crawford can just come in and be seated for a few moments before play begins.

JEAN (*running in and throwing off wraps, excitedly*): Oh, Mother (*takes seat beside Mother*) I came 'round by the church on my way home from school, and Mrs. Adams, the president of the missionary society was there, and she wished me to tell you that the Thank Offering Service will be held next Sunday evening. She gave me this box for our Thank Offering. See, Mother, it says on the box, "How much owest thou thy Lord." Mother, how much are we going to give this year?

MRS. CRAWFORD (*languidly putting down her magazine*): Oh, Jean, don't get so excited over nothing. Really I had forgotten about the Thank Offering Service. I believe they gave out boxes like that about a year ago at one of the missionary meetings, and we were to keep them some place handy and put an offering in every time we were thankful for something. But I forget now what I did with mine. Indeed, I was hoping they would not have a Thank Offering Service this year. I think I will not go to it anyway, there are so many calls for money—the new carpet and the pulpit furniture and all that.

JEAN: Oh, Mother, but this, you see, is different. This is for people who have no church at all, and many of them have never even heard the Gospel. Mary Gorden was telling in our Sunday school class last Sunday about an aunt of hers who is a missionary teacher in a school in Porto Rico, and she said many of the girls came to school bare-foot, and many of them are thin and pale because they never have enough to eat. They are willing to do anything, just anything, to get a chance to learn to read, and most of them have never even seen a Bible. All the girls in our class thought we ought to be very thankful for our nice church and our beautiful high school, and the class voted to give \$10 to the Thank Offering. (*Looking at inscription on box*) Mother, how much *do we* owe our Lord?

MRS. CRAWFORD: Well, Jean, I never thought very much about that. Anyway I surely think we have it paid by this time. We pay our subscription to the church, and we all give something at Sunday school. I pay my dues to the ladies' aid and missionary society, and then there are all the extras for suppers and entertainments and so on. I think we have paid all we owe, and more, too. This missionary business is all right, of course, but I think they have got to carrying it too far. They are always wanting more money for missions.

JEAN: But Mother, haven't we something to be thankful for this year?

MRS. CRAWFORD: Not especially that I know of, Jean. It has been a bad year in your Father's business, and we had that big hospital bill of over \$300 to pay.

JEAN: But, Mother, you got a nicer coat this year than you did last, and Father says he is going to buy a new car the first of the year; and we have just ordered new furniture for the living room.

MRS. CRAWFORD: Well, anyway, Jean, I think I have given my share for missions this year. Mrs. Miller called up after dinner and said she and John would be over Sunday evening; so I think your Father and I will just spend the evening at home with them. I am getting tired of these Thank Offering Services anyway. They are always just about the same thing over and over again.

JEAN: Well, Mother, you will let me go to the services with Mary Gorden, won't you? I want to help give the \$10 from our class, and then I want to see the pageant, too. The name of it is "How Much Owest Thou Thy Lord?" Just the same as these words on the box, and Mrs. Adams says it will be the most interesting pageant they have ever had.

MRS. CRAWFORD: Well, Daughter, suit yourself about that, but do not ask me for any money. Run along now and put the box away in the closet of my room. I suppose I might as well keep it for another year and save them the expense of buying me another one next year. (*Languidly takes up magazine again and settles herself to read.*)

JEAN (*rising and walking slowly towards right of stage reads meditatively from the box as she goes*): "How Much Owest Thou Thy Lord?" (*Dreamily, wistfully says*) I wish, oh, I wish, I wish I knew how much I really owe my Lord.

(*Enter Spirit of Civilization from right, bearing wand. Dressed in long black robe or other appropriate costume. Should be a tall stately person, walking slowly and speaking with slow and measured dignity. At sight of the approaching figure, Jean falls back with a little frightened cry to the side of her mother.*)

JEAN: Mother, what is this coming?

MRS. CRAWFORD (*looking up with a start, rubs her eyes*): I don't know, Daughter. (*Then to Spirit of Civilization*) Who are you and why do you enter our home in this manner?

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: I am the Spirit of Civilization. I have watched over the destinies of humanity from the days of the cave man down to the present time. I have been present in all nations centuries before the Gospel was known to them. I have watched the entrance of the Gospel and the transformation it has wrought in those nations. I know intimately the darkness and sorrow that rests upon the world. I have heard the prayer of this young maiden, and I have come to give answer to her question. I knew well your ancestors in Normandy long centuries ago, before ever the missionaries came to them with the message of the Gospel. And for my first answer I now bid the doors of Time roll back and unveil the mysteries of the past, that you may see your ancestors as they lived in those days before they knew the Gospel. Doors of Time roll back! (*Waves wand and doors slowly open, or curtain rises, revealing stage.*)

SCENE II

(*Rude hut of bark and boughs at right; embers, charred sticks of wood and bones lying about. In center rude fire with stone pot. Crude idol of wood made of tree trunk, features sketched in red crayon. Boughs of trees arranged about stage to represent forest scene. Mother and daughter, Mrs. Crawfut, middle aged, stooped, dirty, barefoot, dressed in old skins. Girl about the age of Jean, straight and lithe. Mother preparing food over pot on fire, girl standing by watching. Girl might be leading large dog. Girl may sit sometimes on old log.*)

JAN: Mother, when will father be home? He has been gone for three suns now and I am so hungry. Mother, where did father go, and why did he go anyway? Why is it that you will not tell me?

MOTHER: Hush, Child. It is not good for you to know about such things now. Why do you continue to ask? Some day when you are older I will tell you.

JAN: But, Mother, I am not a child anymore. I am almost a woman. My cousin Ora is not quite so old as I am and she is to be married next moon. (*Stretching out arms and stretching body up*) See, Mother, I am taller than you. I am not a child. Why cannot I know about these things?

MOTHER (*pausing in work and eyeing daughter wistfully*): True, I did not realize that you were no longer a child. You will know about these things sometime, and I might as well tell you now. Your Father has gone to help offer the human sacrifice to our God, Woden.

JAN: But Mother, I do not understand. What is a *human* sacrifice?
I know we sometimes sacrifice lambs or goats or cattle to our gods,
but what is a human sacrifice? Do you mean that they will sacrifice
a person?

MOTHER: Yes, child.

JAN: Will they really kill some person and burn the body on the altar
of Woden as we do with the sheep and goats?

MOTHER: Yes, Jan.

JAN: But Mother, will that be right.

MOTHER: It is our custom, Jan, and our gods wish it so.

JAN: Mother, how do you know the gods wish it so?

MOTHER: So our priests have always told us.

JAN: And Mother, whom are father and the men with him sacrificing
today?

MOTHER: I have heard that it is a young girl about your age who was
taken captive in our last war with the Germans.

JAN: And why do our men think they must offer this girl as a
sacrifice?

MOTHER: To please the gods, child.

JAN: But Mother, what makes you think this will please the gods?

MOTHER: Have we not heard for many moons when the winds blew
at night the roaring of Woden in the tops of the great trees? And
there has been no food for so long that our people are near to die
of hunger. Woden must be very angry about something, and unless
we appease him with a very costly sacrifice, some great evil will
surely come upon us.

JAN: And, Mother, if sometime the Germans should defeat our men
and take *me* captive, would they offer me as a sacrifice to their
god?

MOTHER: They might, child, but let us hope they never defeat our
men.

JAN: Oh, Mother, this is terrible. Mother, are you sure our gods
are real gods?

MOTHER: I don't know. Our ancestors have always thought so.

JAN: And Mother, are you sure our priests are right about the gods
wanting human sacrifices?

MOTHER: I don't know, Jan. Why do you ask all these questions?

JAN: Oh, Mother, I can't understand all these things. Who made this
big world, these big trees, the clouds, the winds, and the sun?

MOTHER: I don't know, child.

JAN: And what becomes of us when we die? Is that the end of us,
or do we go on living somewhere else?

MOTHER: I don't know.

JAN: Mother, do you suppose there may be one great God who made all these things and who is kind and good, and who loves us and loves the Germans, too, and who loves everybody?

MOTHER: I don't know, Child, what makes you ask such strange questions?

JAN: Why, Mother, when I was to visit my cousin Ora last moon she said a man from their tribe had been away south across the mounts and he told of a strange man who came from a place called Macedonia. They called him a missionary man. And this missionary man had been telling the people how our gods Thor and Woden are not real gods at all, but that there is just one God who made the world and everything else, and that he is a good and kind God and loves everybody. And one time he sent his Son to tell people of his love but they killed him because they did not believe him. Mother, are these things true?

MOTHER: I don't know, Jan. I don't know.

JAN: Oh, Mother, I wish I knew. I wish father knew. Then he would not offer any more human sacrifices, would he? Mother, do you think that missionary man will ever come here and tell us about these things?

MOTHER: I don't know, Child. I don't know. I— don't— k-n-o-w.

(Curtain)

SCENE III

MRS. CRAWFORD (*dazed for a moment, then turning to Spirit of Civilization*): Spirit of Civilization, are these things true? Is it true that our Ancestors were like that? And did they really offer human sacrifices to their gods?

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: All these things are most certainly true. The Franks, the Britons, the Celts, and the Saxons, also the Germans, all were ancestors of you Americans, and they were once all just such primitive children of nature as you have seen tonight. They lived in rude huts or caves. They dressed in skins. Their food was the flesh of animals or such other substances as they could wring from nature by their primitive arts. And they offered human sacrifices to their gods.

JEAN: Why yes, Mother, I remember that just last month in our history class we studied about these early inhabitants of the British Islands and Northern France and our teacher said they were our ancestors. She said that no doubt the Celtic and Norman blood flowed in the veins of many of the boys and girls in our history

class. And I remember the names of two of their gods. They were Thor and Woden, and our history book says they did offer human sacrifices to their gods.

MRS. CRAWFORD: Spirit of Civilization, tell us more about the religion of these people.

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: Their priests were called Druids. Some of their customs were most cruel and barbarous. They offered condemned prisoners, especially prisoners of war, for sacrifices, and if there were not enough of these, then innocent persons were sacrificed. The chief deities of the Scandinavians were Woden, Friga and Thor. Woden was the god of war. The fourth day of the week was consecrated to him and was called Woden's day from which we get our name Wednesday. Friga was worshipped on the sixth day. Hence that was called Friga's day, or Friday, while Thursday was Thor's day. Thus these days of our week get their names from these gods whom our fathers worshipped.

JEAN: Yes, Mother, and I remember that our history has a picture of a place in England called Stonehenge where these ancient Druid priests conducted their worship of these gods. Just think, Mother, that we might still be worshipping these same gods and believing in these same cruel rites, if it had not been for the Christian missionaries from the south who preached the Gospel to our barbarian ancestors.

MRS. CRAWFORD: Tell us, Spirit of Civilization, is it really true that the Gospel was preached to our heathen ancestors by Christian missionaries like those we send today? And who were some of these missionaries? Are the names of any of them known?

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: Indeed they are, madam, and most brave and devout men these missionaries were. They encountered great dangers and endured untold hardships in evangelizing our forefathers. But their hearts were so full of the love of Christ that they were willing to risk any dangers, counting not their lives dear unto them, that they might win these people of the forest from their crude superstitions and cruel practices to the knowledge of the living and true God. Many of their names are now immortal in the annals of missionary history. There was Augustine who came from Rome with a band of forty companions to teach the Christian faith in Britain in 596. And Patricius was the great missionary to the Celts. And St. Columba was the hero who, from his little colony on the Island of Iona, evangelized Scotland. And then there was Boniface, the apostle to the Franks.

JEAN: Oh, Mother, one day our history teacher asked me to find out all I could about Boniface. I found an old book in the library that told all about him. His parents wanted him to have a business career or something like that, but he felt in his heart the missionary call. So he became a missionary to the Franks. There was a great oak which was known as the Oak of Giesmar. It was considered sacred to the worship of Thor. And Boniface found it impossible

to keep the people from the superstitious Thor worship, so long as that oak was standing. So one day he seized an axe and began to cut it down. The people stood about horrified, expecting Thor to strike him dead. But nothing happened to the brave missionary, who kept on with his chopping until finally the great tree came crashing to the ground. Then the people, convinced that Thor was no god, if he could not save his own sacred oak, all began to shout, "The Lord he is God, the Lord he is God." And on the spot a Christian church was built of wood from this very oak tree. Then it went on to tell how Boniface trained other missionaries and how he established agricultural and industrial schools, and thus the Franks were Christianized and civilized. But Mother, although I read all this in that old book, somehow I never thought of it as I have tonight, that we might still be worshipping these same old gods if it had not been for those brave missionaries who preached the Gospel to our ancestors hundreds of years ago.

MRS. CRAWFORD: Yes, Child, I have known of these things in a hazy sort of way, but somehow I never realized what they meant to us. The good Spirit of Civilization has shown me these things in an entirely new light tonight. Spirit of Civilization, I think I begin to see that I owe my Lord more than I ever realized before. Have you anything more to show us that will help us more fully to understand how much we owe our Lord?

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: Yes, indeed. We will now bid the doors of distance roll back, that you may look upon a home far back among the mountains of Tennessee—a home that our Christian civilization has passed by. (*Waves wand and commands doors to roll back. Retires to chair at one side.*)

SCENE IV

(*A mountain shack. Woman and girl about the age of Jean and Mrs. Crawford, very poorly dressed. Girl in bare feet, calico slip. Woman with old shoes. They are seated shucking beans. Home-made stools, broken-legged chair, ragged shades at ragstuffed windows. Ears of corn, etc., hung up drying. The desired effect can be produced with almost no expense and surprisingly little work. If all the above cannot be procured other things will suggest themselves that will serve equally well.*)

JEANIE: Mother, I seed Minnie Clyne down to the Post Office this morning. You know they live over on Marrowbone Creek, and she said that she was going this fall to that 'ere missionary school away up at Bighorn City.

MOTHER: Wall—now—Child (*drawl*) what do you think of that? But haint that a right smart ways fur Minnie to go frum home?

JEANIE: She said it is about 200 miles, Mother. She must go on horse back a hundred miles over the mountains to Foxburg. There be a railroad frum there to Bighorn City.

MOTHER: When bees she goin'?

JEANIE: In September.

MOTHER: Laws sakes, and I suppose the poor chile won't be home till Christmas.

JEANIE: She said she could not come home at Christmas. It would cost too much.

MOTHER: Will she be gone all winter then?

JEANIE: Yes, till the first of June.

MOTHER: Poor chile, how long that will be fur her to be so far frum home. And Minnie such a home gal, too. Why, she never has been frum home over night before. How can she stand it?

JEANIE: I dunno, Mother. But she said as how she was just goin' to stand it, if it killed her, she wants book larnen so bad.

MOTHER: But where be the Clynes gotten all the money to send Minnie away thar to school?

JEANIE: She said as how they had been savin' fur a right smart time and how they sold a cow, and then an aunt of hern what lives in Nashville was helpin' some. And Minnie says she gits a scholarship. Some man up north gives enough money each year to help one boy or girl. They call it a scholarship or something like that. But she said she would have to be awful savin'. But she said she didn't mind that, if she could only go to school.

MOTHER: Wall, Minnie is a smart gal. I reckon she will git ahead, if she has any chance. (*Pause, while Jeanie seems to be thinking.*)

JEANIE: Mother, do you suppose I could go to school with Minnie?

MOTHER: Law sakes, Chile, whatever put that into your head? Don't you know it will take all the money to pay the taxes?

JEANIE: Yes, Mother, I know that, but haint there some way? Caynt I work fur my board and room? I have heerd of girls doin' that. Oh, Mother, I do so want to larn something and be like girls that go to school. I would be willing to do anything. Mother, haint there no way?

MOTHER: I dunno of anyway Chile. Even if you could work fur your board, where be the money to come frum fur books, clothes, and all that? Could you git one of them scholarship things like what Minnie is gotten?

JEANIE: No, Mother, Minnie says there haint no more scholarships. They be all given out.

MOTHER: If we had a school here at Bigville, you could go.

JEANIE: Oh, Mother, why haint there no school here at Bigville? I know there would be 200 boys and girls to go to it. Why don't them missionary people start a school here?

MOTHER: Wall, Jeanie, you know how that travelin' missionary man who was through here last month said how he would like to start a school here, there be so many boys and girls who caynt go away to school, but he said there haint no money for a school here.

JEANIE: But don't you think, Mother, if them rich folks in the North knowed how bad we'uns wants to go to school they would give money fur a school here? Mother (*begins to cry*), will I just have to marry Larie Hosack and go and live in his old shack all my life, like you have done?

MOTHER (*coming over and putting arms around Jeanie and stroking her hair*): I hope not, Chile, I have always prayed since the days you were a wee baby that you might go to school and git book larnen and be like them girls the missionary man tells about, and not have to live in a shack all your life like I have done. But I dunno, Child, I dunno. I—dunno—I—dun-no.

(*Curtain*)

JEAN (*turning to Spirit of Civilization*): Spirit of Civilization, are there girls like that right down in Tennessee who have no school to go to?

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: Yes, there are many girls among the mountains very much like Jeanie. Most of them have had a little schooling. But the public schools are very poor and far apart, and many of the people are practically illiterate. Many like this girl you have just seen long for a better life. They have heard just enough about the kind of life boys and girls live in the great world beyond the mountains to make them realize what they are missing. This only adds discontent to the poverty of their lives. The missionary schools have done wonderful things for some of these young people, but thousands of them are yet unreached, unable, through poverty or distance, to go to one of these schools, left only to dream dreams of a better life that will never be realized.

JEAN: Oh, Mother, I feel so sorry for that poor girl. And just think she seems to be about my age and her name is just the same as mine, only they call her Jeanie instead of Jean.

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: Yes, you will find many of the same names among these mountain people that you find here because they have the same Scotch, Irish and English ancestry. This girl's first name is Jean, and her last name may be Crawford, just the same as yours, for among these people Crawford, Rogers, Robinson, McCoy, Campbell and Williamson are very common names, just as they are with you.

JEAN: Oh, Mother, I wonder whether Jeanie might be some forty-second cousin of mine or something like that.

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: It is entirely possible that she is, because her great grandfather perhaps came from the same place in the Old Country that yours came from.

JEAN: Oh, Mother, isn't this romantic? But just to think, Mother, that I am going away to Vassar next year and Jeanie can't go anywhere. Mother, why can't I go to some cheaper college? Some college that will cost only half as much and give the other half to Jeanie to go to school somewhere. Oh, Mother, may I?

MRS. CRAWFORD: Hush, Child. You must not think of such foolishness. You know it is all arranged for you to go to Vassar. We are sending you to Vassar because of the special advantages you will have there, and your father would never consent to your going to a cheaper school.

JEAN: Yes, Mother, but where is Jeanie to get only a little of those advantages? And I wonder, Mother, I wonder whether part of what we owe our Lord could not be paid to Jeanie. You know, Mother he said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Just to think, Mother, if Great Grandfather Crawford had happened to go to Tennessee instead of coming to Pennsylvania, we might be living now just like Jeanie and her mother. You know, Mother, it might have been that way.

SPIRIT OF CIVILIZATION: I have come to help you answer the question, "How much owest thou thy Lord," and before I go I shall bid these doors that conceal the world's life to unfold again that you may get a glimpse of the life your sisters live in far-off China. (*Waves wand and bids doors unfold.*)

(*Curtain*)

SCENE V

(*A Chinese home of the poorer sort. Sick girl about Jeanie's age on bed made of bench or cot. Mother considerably older looking than Mrs. Crawford, working over a table, evidently preparing some food or mixing some medicine for the sick girl. Man still older looking, seated on a low stool, making baskets or some other work. Girl's name "Ah Sen." Man's name "Chee Lin."*)

AH SEN (*tossing in bed*): Oh, Mother, I am so sick (*begins to cry*)

MOTHER (*leaves work, goes over to bed at side of bed from audience and strokes girl's head*): There, Ah Sen, don't cry. (*Takes girl's hand, gently stroking, squatting by bed.*) There, Ah Sen, don't cry. Mother is doing all she can for you. Some evil spirit has

entered your body. I will send for the priest to come and drive it out, and then you will be well. (*Turns to Father*) Chee Lin, do go for the priest to come and drive the evil spirit out of Ah Sen, or I fear she will die.

CHEE LIN: But you know the priest will want many cash to drive out the demon, and we have only a few cash in the house, and these we must keep to buy food for Ah Sen.

MOTHER: But what use will food be to her when she is dead? And she surely will die, if we do not get the demon out of her throat soon.

CHEE LIN: Well, I will go see (*rises and goes out*).

AH SEN (*putting hand to throat*): Oh, Mother, my throat hurts so, I can't stand it, and (*gasping*) Mother, I can hardly breathe any more. Are you sure it really is a demon in my throat?

MOTHER: I don't know, child. That is what they all say.

AH SEN: If only that missionary doctor were here who used to have the hospital down by the river. I am sure he could cure me. You know he cured so many children one year who were all sick just like I am. They said he put some kind of medicine in their backs. He said it was a new cure they had found in America.

MOTHER: Yes, I think, if he were here, he could cure you.

AH SEN: Mother, why did the missionary doctor leave our city?

MOTHER: It seems that the Americans did not send money enough for all the hospitals; so some of them had to be closed, and ours was one of these.

AH SEN: Oh, why did not the Americans send enough money to keep our hospital open? You know, Mother, how many children would have died that year when so many were sick, if it had not been for the American doctor. Surely, if the Americans knew, they would send more money.

MOTHER: Hush, Child. You must not speak hard things of the Americans. They have been very good. Perhaps their crops have been very poor this year, and they have no money to spare.

AH SEN: Mother, where did the American doctor go from here?

MOTHER: They say he went to Lean Chow, and has a large hospital there.

AH SEN: How far is Lean Chow?

MOTHER: It is many, many miles from here. Over 200 miles.

AH SEN: Do you suppose the American doctor could come here to cure me?

MOTHER: It is too far, Ah Sen.

AH SEN: But Mother, I have heard that he has a new kind of carriage that goes very fast.

MOTHER: Even so he could not run his carriage over the mountains.

AH SEN: Oh, Mother, what shall I do? I am so sick!

MOTHER: Here comes father with the priest. He will drive out the demon, and then you will be well. (*Enter Father and priest, priest carrying gong and other paraphernalia. Mother approaches priest, bows down before him.*)

MOTHER: Oh, Priest, an evil spirit has entered our child's throat and is choking out her life. Do drive him out.

PRIEST: You must give me a hundred cash first, else the demon will not go out.

MOTHER: But sixty cash is all the money I have.

PRIEST: Then you must give me that.

MOTHER: Will not fifty cash do. Let me keep ten cash to buy a little food for poor Ah Sen.

PRIEST: No, I cannot drive out the demon, unless you give all the sixty cash, and then it will be difficult, for it should have been one hundred cash.

MOTHER (*hands over the money*): Well, here it is. Now do drive out the demon quick. (*Priest takes gong and goes near Ah Sen's head. Beats gong and sways his body, muttering something. Lays down gong and shakes Ah Sen violently, uttering a great shout.*)

PRIEST: There goes the demon. (*Rushes to door and closes it to keep demon from returning. Gathers up his paraphernalia and goes out at a door opposite to the one the demon goes out. Ah Sen lies very still. Eyes closed. Apparently dead. Mother comes near and kneels by bed with hand on Ah Sen's head. Father comes and takes Ah Sen's hand in his.*)

MOTHER: Ah Sen. Ah Sen, my child, are you dead?

AH SEN (*opening her eyes, speaks feebly*): No, Mother, but oh, I am so sick!

MOTHER: But the evil spirit has gone out.

AH SEN: I don't believe it really was a demon, and my throat pains so. Oh, Mother, I am choking, and the room seems so close. Mother please open the door.

MOTHER: We must not open the door, or the demon will return.

AH SEN: Father, do carry me out where the air is fresh and cool.

FATHER: I must not do that, my child, for the demon is out there and he would sure get back in your throat again. (*Ah Sen lies quiet for a while and seems to breathe easier. Mother goes over and prostrates herself before the family idol, and seems to be agonizing in prayer. Is called back by a paroxysm of coughing by Ah Sen. Ah Sen raises upon elbow.*)

AH SEN (*between gasps*): Oh—I—wish—the—missionary—doctor—were back—here in—our—city. They say there was a beautiful lady who went about with the doctor and told the sick people wonderful things about God, and about—about—some one—c-c-called—J-J-Jesus, who loved children—and about a place called h-h-heaven. (*Mother is supporting Ah Sen, while father is sitting by with face buried in hands.*)

AH SEN (*breathing easier again*): Mother, do you know anything about this Jesus?

MOTHER: No, child.

AH SEN: Do you know anything about heaven, Mother?

MOTHER: No, Ah Sen.

AH SEN: Mother why are people sick?

MOTHER: I don't know.

AH SEN: Mother, who is God?

MOTHER: I don't know.

AH SEN: Mother, does God love us?

MOTHER: I don't know, Ah Sen.

AH SEN: Mother, what becomes of people when they die?

MOTHER: I don't know my child.

AH SEN: Oh, Mother, I wish—I wish—I knew. Can't you tell me, Mother?

MOTHER: No, my child—I—don't—know.

AH SEN: Mother, hold my hand. Mother, it is getting cold (*clings to her mother*), and oh, Mother, it is dark, so dark. Oh,—so—d-a-r-k. (*Relaxes hold on her mother and falls back on pillow. Father goes over and prostrates himself before idol. Mother lays white cloth over face of dead child, then falls on knees with hands stretched out over child's body, weeping, face buried in arms.*)

(Curtain)

(*During foregoing scene, Spirit of Civilization has quietly withdrawn, unnoticed by Mrs. Crawford and Jean. At climax of scene, Jean has held her Mother's hand in a tense grip. Softly but distinctly can be heard behind the stage the chorus, "Send the light the blessed Gospel light; let it shine from shore to shore. Send the light and let its radiant beams light the world forever more." Song ends. All is quiet for a few moments. Jean and her Mother are lost in stunned reverie.*)

JEAN (*speaking huskily*): Mother, I think I know now how much we owe our Lord.

MRS. CRAWFORD (*looking up into Jean's face wistfully*): How much, Jean?

JEAN: Everything. We just owe him everything, Mother.

MRS. CRAWFORD (*pressing Jean's hand*): Yes, Jean, I see it now. I never realized it before.

JEAN (*holding up offering box*): And Mother, how much shall we put in the box? (*Anxiously.*)

MRS. CRAWFORD: Jean, don't you think we could get along without the new parlor furniture?

JEAN (*hugging mother around the neck*): Oh, Mother, I am sure we could. And just think that will be \$300 for our box. Oh, won't Mrs. Adams be happy? (*Then continues thoughtfully.*) But, Mother, I don't feel as though that will pay my debt to my Lord. I—I—think I owe him more than that.

MRS. CRAWFORD: What do you think you owe him, Child?

JEAN: I think—I think—I owe him my life, Mother. See (*holding up box*) it says on the other side of the box, "Who gave himself for us." Mother, I want to learn to be a missionary doctor and go and help those people where Ah Sen lived. I feel that is the only way I can pay my debt to my Lord. Mother, may I go?

MOTHER: Jean, you are all we have, but I would not keep you back. (*Thoughtfully with bowed head*) "For he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." (*Then looking up at name of Pageant over the stage.*) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Yes, Jean, go—and God bless you! (*Jean and Mrs. Crawford retire quietly. Chorus behind stage sings "Beneath the Cross of Jesus."*)

Price 15 cents.